

You Fight Like a Baby(sitter) by ItsAllShiTed

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Summary:

With his reputation ruined, Steve's main source of social interaction is a group of middle schoolers. Now that group of nerds wanted him in their D&D campaign. What did he get himself into?

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Author's Note:

Heyyooooo. So this is, uhh... the first fanfic I've ever actually finished. Hooray! I just really wanted a fluffy fic of Steve learning to play D&D with his children. I am a D&D nerd, after all... I hope y'all like it! I'll have more Stranger Things fics coming in the future, but those will probably take me a little longer to write since I've never been too fantastic at plot stuff.

Lemme know what you think <3

Since the gate closed, life went back to normal. Well, as normal as it could get after they fought a bunch of demodogs and closed a rift to another- wherever it was. The whole thing was still kind of a foggy mess for Steve; everything happened so quickly and part of it he was unconscious for. Not to mention its existence never made complete sense to him anyway. It didn't matter now, though. It was over and he could go back to being-

What was he now? Dating Nancy, he realized what an asshole he used to be and tried to be Mr. Perfect, which included ditching the piece of shit friends and, in turn, his popularity. He didn't mind then, he had Nancy and he was a better person and that was all he needed, but now... Now she was off with Byers and he had a new emptiness inside him he didn't know he could feel. It almost seemed like there was nothing that could fill it. Almost.

The bell rang. Steve threw his bag over his shoulder and dipped out of the classroom, not paying attention to his peers. They were all so loud and obnoxious, but with 6 months until he was out of this hell hole, it was all white noise to him. Heading out to his car, he slipped on his sunglasses and kept his head low. People's eyes averted once they saw him, as though the years of King Steve meant nothing.

When the door slammed shut he let out a sigh. Silence. He leaned back in his seat and let his eyes fall shut, enjoying the comfortable quiet while he waited for-

The minutes felt like moments before he heard the passenger door swing open and a thud as Dustin hopped in. "Hey, Steve," he said happily, his signature smile audible in his voice. Steve couldn't help the small grin that tugged at his mouth as he opened his eyes.

"Hey, kid," he said fondly, starting the car and glancing over at the curly haired dork beside him. "When are you getting your bike fixed so I don't have to be your chauffeur?"

Dustin adjusted his headset, watching his friends bike off in the distance. "Maybe you could speed things up and get me a new bike since your parents are so loaded," he joked, buckling up. Steve rolled his eyes, pulling out of the spot and starting for Dustin's.

"Ha ha, real cute. Be thankful I'm even driving you home at all." It's not like Steve actually minded. As annoying as the kid could be, Dustin was definitely growing on him. It was like when a new song came out that you really didn't like, but then because everyone's listening to it and you hear it so much, you realize the song is actually kinda catchy.

Dustin looked up at Steve, then, and once again flashed his new teeth. "Thaaaaank you, Steeeeeve," he drew out in a sing-song voice, throwing their banter ball right back in Steve's court. Before Steve could make another retort, Dustin perked up excitedly, his whole body turned towards Steve now. "Oh! Are you busy Friday?"

Steve tilted his head, feigning a look of deep thought. The kid knew full well that he never had plans anymore, but it was flattering that he still asked. "Aside from giving you a ride home and maybe seeing Tuff Turf... nope." He glanced over to Dustin, quirked a brow at him. "Why? Got somewhere you need to be?"

"Well," Dustin started, clapping his hands together, "we were thinking of playing another Dungeons and Dragons campaign that night, and although we have more than enough people to play, we're all in agreement that you would make a good addition to the party."

The way he said it made the invitation sound like a great honor. “So what do you say? Wanna be our tank?”

In all his years, Steve Harrington swore he’d never do something majorly embarrassing like playing Dungeons and Dragons. “What do you mean? Like, an actual tank?” Now, here he was, thinking it might be fun.

Dustin let out a soft laugh, shaking his head. “Ohhhh, Steve. You have a lot to learn, my friend.”

As the week went on, Dustin made a habit of schooling Steve in the basics of Dungeons and Dragons on their way to and from school. He knew the difference between the dice and what XP were and all the different classes. They decided Steve would be their Fighter since that was basically what he was for them anyway.

Steve couldn’t help but get more and more excited with each lesson, deciding that the game did sound fun after all, especially playing with kids like Dustin and his friends. Once Friday came around, he drove over to the Wheeler’s with Dustin after a little while of hanging out, thankful to have his favorite support with him the first time he was back at that house since Nancy.

Luckily, Mike was the one to answer the door, and he gave them both a nod, not seeming terribly jazzed to see him. “Hey, Steve. Everyone’s downstairs already.” And just like that, he turned on his heels and lead them back. Steve lightly hit Dustin’s shoulder, giving him a dirty look. “I thought you said everyone wanted me here,” he snapped at him quietly, following Mike in.

Dustin laughed awkwardly, following right behind. “Okay, so... maybe it wasn’t a *complete* agreement. It was kind of like a suggestion that I made, and then they said that you would think it’s stupid and ruin the campaign, and then *I* said that you were cool and since they invited people I should get to invite people too and so they-“

“Yeah, yeah, alright, I get it. Coulda warned me, though.”

“I didn’t think you’d come if I told you...” Dustin seemed to deflate a bit from Steve’s reaction.

Steve quickly fixed it with a smile and another soft shove. “Cool it, kid. If you invite me to something, I’m pretty likely to say yes.” He wasn’t entirely sure how he got to this point, but seeing Dustin upset really didn’t fly with him.

Mike rolled his eyes at them. “Are you two done? We have a game to play.” He took his spot behind the DM screen. “Alright. Lucas, did you help Max make her character?” Steve took a seat that was open for him between Dustin and Eleven.

“Yeah, the thing about that is..”

“I don’t want to be a Thief! I want to be a Zoomer,” Max said, a determined look on her face. Even on a day to day basis, there was some fire in that one, Steve noted.

Mike groaned a little, shaking his head. “I already told you, that’s not a thing!”

“Can’t we make it a thing???”

“No!”

“C’mon man,” Lucas butted in, “Can’t we just make it? I know it’s not a thing, but we could just give her some Rogue and Illusionist stuff that fits and have the leveling system the same as a Thief.” Steve was both proud and ashamed that he was actually following this conversation. Thanks, Dustin.

Mike rubbed his face, not bothering to hide how annoyed he was. “FINE. But do it fast, or she’s not playing. We don’t have a lot of time!” As Lucas flipped through their player handbook to try and figure out the best way to make a Zoomer, Mike turned to them. “How about you, Steve? Got your character ready, or did Dustin forget to fill you in?”

“Yeah, we’ve been working on it all week,” Steve spoke up, nodding

a little as Dustin shook his head.

“Did you seriously think I would forget to fill in Steve after fighting to have him in our party?” Dustin asked while pulling Steve’s character sheet out of his bag. “Alright, so we have him down as a human fighter, but we haven’t rolled any of his ability scores or his HP yet because *someone* wouldn’t let me roll dice in the car,” he said pointedly at the only person in the basement he could be talking to.

Steve just shrugged and said, “I didn’t want you to lose your dice, alright?”

“I’m an excellent dice roller, Steve. My dice would’ve been fine.” Kids, man. They always had to be right. He just rolled his eyes and nodded along as Mike took the paper and analyzed it. Dustin pulled out his dice and handed them over to Steve. “You remember what they’re for, right?” Dustin asked, wanting to prove further that Steve would be nothing but great.

Steve recognized the tone and decided not to protest being treated like he was stupid. “Yeah... we use the d20 in game a lot and for rolling my ability scores and... the d10 is what I roll for my Health Points, right?”

Dustin looked really proud up until the very end, where he cringed. “Hit Points, Steve. Hit Points. Your d10 is your Hit Die,” he explained, hoping everyone would let it slide. The rest of Steve’s sentence seemed to impress them enough, so they did, which made Steve even more proud of himself. Dustin pulled out his dice and started rolling for Steve’s ability scores, which Steve paid attention to so he was sure he would know what he was doing when the game started.

Once everything was settled and everyone’s characters were ready, they dove into the campaign Mike worked so hard on, as Steve was told. It took some observing and some serious pointers from Dustin before Steve was actually comfortable participating, and once he did he couldn’t deny that it was seriously fun.

“Halfway up the mountain, a noise cuts the thick silence... you hear a rumbling echoing around you, but you can’t tell where it’s coming

from..." Mike speaks, ominously. He was very good at this whole DMing thing, from what Steve could tell. He seemed like he had a real knack for it. "As the sound nears, you recognize it as less of a rumbling, and more of a... growling."

"Aw, shit," Dustin immediately said. "It's the Displacer Beast, I'm *telling you*." That was definitely one Steve hadn't heard before.

"The what now?" He asked quickly, trying to keep up.

"What the hell is a Displacer Beast?" Max chimed in, sounding just as confused as Steve, thankfully.

Lucas shook his head a little, everyone appearing to ignore their questions. "Dude, there's no way it's the Displacer Beast. We just fought a Chimera an hour ago." Shit, had they really been playing that long?

Mike didn't let them discuss for long. "There's something that shifts onto the path up ahead... a black figure slowly comes into view as a loud growl thunders around you!" Mike imitates the sound they would hear and gives El a signal. Steve was on the edge of his seat. Mid growl, El stared hard at his screen, causing a figure to go shooting over it and landing on the board with a loud *THUD*. "IT'S THE DISPLACER BEAST!!!" Mike shouts, causing everyone but the three newbies to react negatively.

"SON OF A BITCH, LUCAS, I TOLD YOU!!!" Dustin yelled, right as Lucas was shouting "ARE YOU SERIOUS?!" and Will was simply giving a groan in protest.

"The Displacer Beast's tentacles slither at its sides, getting ready to attack!!" Mike calls out, really putting the pressure on them.

Dustin was quick to command, looking immediately to Steve. "Alright, Steve, now's your time!! You're our tank, we need you to charge in there with your great club and KICK IT'S ASS!!!"

Mike immediately broke character, looking at Dustin incredulously. "Wait, what?? I thought *I* was our tank!!"

"No, no, you're our *off* tank. Steve is the one that goes in and gets the

ever-loving shit kicked out of him so we can take the son of a bitch down. Tank,” Dustin explained as if it were as simple as that, though Steve really didn’t like the sound of him always being the one to take one for the team, even if it was just a fictional character.

Mike really couldn’t argue with that. “Fine— The black tentacles are headed STRAIGHT FOR DUSTIN.”

Without hesitation, Steve spoke up. “Alright, alright, I run in front of Dustin and swing at that douchebag with my god damn great club!” He rolled for his attack, *really* hoping he didn’t mess this up.

His die fell on the table and for once, everyone was silent. Steve was oddly afraid of looking but knew he had to.

It was a 12. Steve had no clue what that would mean for him. Mike’s face was a mixture of disappointment and ease. Steve suspected Mike wanted him to roll much lower. It was only for a moment, though, before

“You swing at the tentacles and connect with one of them!” Mike lets out a loud roar, imitating the Displacer Beast’s pain. “The beast’s figure wavers, taken aback by your hit, then disappears to reveal it’s true location!!! After a moment of hesitation, one of the other tentacles wraps around you, grappling you!!”

The room burst into noise once again, partially proud cheers for Steve’s help and mostly panic to keep going. Dustin was mainly shouting about how right he was about Steve being their tank, meanwhile, Steve was just trying to figure out if he liked what just happened or not. He didn’t get much time to think about it before Lucas and Max were heading closer to the damn thing, Will was casting a protection spell, and El was looking through the list of spells Mike made for her. Dustin was waiting to see what would happen to Steve, sticking by his side. At least someone cared.

It didn’t matter, though. Mike let out another loud, imitation roar. “The tentacles quickly start pulling Steve in towards the beast, it’s grip tightening as it’s getting ready to RIP HIM APART!”

Well, that didn’t sound good at all.

Dustin panicked, wanting to help his friend as quickly as possible. "Okay, I'm going to pull out my saxophone and start playing some smooth jazz! And thaaat is going to cast Greater Heroism so Steve can KICK. ITS. ASS." There was something about Dustin playing smooth jazz to make Steve stronger that was positively hilarious.

"What's the point?" Lucas butted in. "We're probably going to take it out soon anyway!"

"I don't know, I think Steve could help a little," Will said quietly, giving Steve a kind smile. Finally, someone besides Dustin sticking up for him. He knew he liked Will.

"Yeah, Steve's pretty good with a bat, I think he's got a good shot," Max added. Another kid's support. Were they just messing with him or something? Did they all think he was going to die? No, Dustin wouldn't mess with him like that.

Lucas rolled his eyes but didn't want to go against Max. "Alright, fine. Let him get his one hit in."

Eleven finally picked out her spell. She slid the list over a bit towards Mike and pointed to one. Mike's brows furrowed slightly as he looked down to read the name, then looked up into her eyes. "Are you sure?" She nodded, looking back into his eyes and giving the softest smile, which made Mike's irritation visibly melt away. "Okay...

"Eleven casts Protection From Evil on Steve as he passes her." She reached over and touched Steve's shoulder as Mike spoke to act it out, giving Steve another gentle, half smile.

"Kick its ass," she echoed in her eery yet sweet sort of way.

Steve hadn't felt this confident in a long time, which made him feel a little pathetic for a bunch of middle schoolers being the cause of it. He looked at Mike with a wide grin, leaning forward on the table just a bit. "Since everyone seems to have my back, I think I'll wait until I get close enough to it and bash its face in." He once again picked up his loaned d20 and shook it around in his cupped hands, praying he didn't embarrass himself.

He dropped the die onto the table.

No... no way. Did he suddenly forget how to read or did fate finally decide not to be a dick to him during a nerd game? The die landed on 20.

Once again, cheers filled the basement. Dustin clapped him on the shoulder, shouting louder than anyone, and even Eleven seemed much more excited than normal. Mike looked utterly shocked, but he quickly burst into an excited narration on what exactly happened.

“The beast cries out as Steve’s bat slams into his skull!” He lets out a high pitched, pained growl as he throws his head back. Steve can’t help but laugh a little; these kids really got into this game. Apparently, he did now too. “The tentacle released him from its hold and slithered away as it braced to pounce on you, but before it can you smash it again!” Another cry. “The Displacer Beast crumples to the ground, its paws struggling to try and push it up, but it’s JUST TOO WEAK! Moments later, it collapses and lays lifeless: DEAD!”

Steve felt like he was on top of the world. He just killed a Displacer Beast. Before that night, he had no idea what that was, but he killed one.

“Mike! You need to finish up your game, Jonathan and Chief Hopper are here!” Mike’s mom called from upstairs. There was no way it was already 8:30. Except it totally was and the hours had flown by quicker than Steve thought possible. Everyone started to simmer down, gathering their things as the couples reluctantly started their goodbyes. It was kinda cute, watching their pure young love, but it was also a little annoying.

Will looked at Steve, smiling as he pulled his backpack on. “You were pretty cool today,” he commented softly, causing Steve’s grin to spread. “You’ll come back next campaign, right?” Will sounded so hopeful and it made Steve’s heart melt. Kids, man.

He shrugged, his grin spreading into a smirk. “I guess that depends on if Dork Master over here wants me back,” he teased, his gaze shifting over to Heart-Eye Mike.

Reluctantly looking up from his soft conversation with El, Mike met his gaze and rolled his eyes. "I'll make it harder for you next time." That was acceptance enough for Steve. Will also looked pleased with this response.

"Yeah, that was lame how easy that was," Lucas once again piped up. Max elbowed him, rolling her eyes. "You were pretty cool, though, Steve," he finished, which seemed to satisfy.

Dustin was beaming, the positive feedback fueling him. "I *told* you guys he would be good. Next time I make a suggestion and you think it's stupid, I want you all to think back on this experience and realize that I'm always right." Everyone rolled their eyes, including Steve.

Once everyone said bye to Will and El (the latter of which took a lot longer since you practically had to pry apart Mike and El), Steve put a hand on Dustin's shoulder. "You ready to head home? I told your mom I'd get you back at a decent time."

Dustin easily smiled up at Steve, nodding. "Yeah, there's no need to stick around after such a great victory," he teased. Steve just shook his head and headed for the stairs, saying bye to everyone who lingered on their way out. Nancy was halfway to the stairs from saying goodbye to Jonathan when they passed by, Steve giving her a half-hearted wave. Her smile was apologetic as she waved back, a twinkle in her eyes that he'd never seen when they were together. Maybe them being apart was truly for the best.

The encounter didn't make his smile falter though, staying just as bright as Dustin's even as their asses hit the BMW seats. Steve looked over to Dustin, who was already looking at him as well. "Thanks for coming, Steve," Dustin said softly. "I know this isn't normally your thing, but it was fun, right?" There was a slight waver in Dustin's tone that hinted he was unsure, searching for Steve's approval— and Steve would give it every time.

"Yeah, it was really fun. Thanks for weaseling me in, kid," Steve said fondly, looking over Dustin's boyishly cute face once more before turning his attention to the road and starting his car.

Dustin was thrilled. "Does this mean you'll officially join our party?"

“Sure, Dustin. I’ll join your nerd party.”